

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 IO-11 OMB-01 CU-02 AID-05 /087 W

----- 052429

R 081030Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6189

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENTIANE 0590

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINS, LA, FR

SUBJECT: LAO ARREST FRENCH TEACHER

1. LAO HAVE ARRESTED FRENCH CHEMIST WHO IS ONE OF GROUP OF FRENCH TEACHERS WORKING IN VIENTIANE UNDER FRENCH ASSISTANCE PROGRAM. FRENCHMAN ARRESTED, A MR. SALUZZO, TEACHES PHARMACY AT CONG DOK SCHOOL IN VIENTIANE. ACCORDING TO FRENCH CONSUL BONDY, SALUZZO WAS ARRESTED AROUND 6. P.M. MARCH 1 BECAUSE HE DROVE HIS CAR INTO KILOMETER-6 ENCAMPMENT (FORMER USAID HOUSING COMPOUND) WHERE HIGH PATHET LAO OFFICIALS ARE BELIEVED TO BE LIVING. BONDY STATES THAT SALUZZO WAS DRIVING AROUND VIENTIANE WITH LAO GIRL STUDENT OF HIS AT DONG DOK WHEN THEY SAW THAT BARRIER TO KM-6 AREA WAS OPEN. THEY DROVE INTO COMPOUND AS FAR AS SECOND BARRIER, WHICH WAS GUARDED. WHEN SALUZZO ATTEMPTED TO TURN CAR AROUND AND DRIVE OUT OF KM-6 HE AND LAO GIRL WERE ARRESTED. BOTH ARE NOW BEING HELD AT CENTRAL POLICE STATION (ON SETTHATHIRATH STREET) AND ARE ACCUSED BY POLICE OF SPYING.

2. BONDY TOLD EMBOFF THAT FRENCH AMBASSADOR CARDI HAS
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APPOINTMENT WITH LAO FOREIGN MINISTER PHOUNE SIPRASEUTH

MARCH 8 TO DISCUSS SALUZZO'S ARREST. BONDY WAS OPTIMISTIC THAT SALUZZO WILL BE RELEASED SOON, AS NOT ONLY FRENCH AMBASSADOR BUT ALSO LAO OFFICIALS AT DONG DOK SCHOOL AND LAO HEAD OF MAHOSOT HOSPITAL ARE WORKING FOR HIS RELEASE.

3. BONDY TOLD EMBOFF THAT HE WAS PERSONNALLY MORE WORRIED ABOUT CASE OF ANOTHER FRENCHMAN WHO WAS ARRESTED IN VIENTIANE IN MAY OF 1975 AND WAS STILL IN PRISON. THIS FRENCHMAN, WHOM HE DID NOT NAME, WORKED AS MUSICIAN WITH PROPAGANDA SECTION OF FAR (ROYAL LAO ARMY) AND RECEIVED HIS SALARY FROM USAID. HE HAD ALSO BEEN ARRESTED AS "SPY." BONDY BELIEVES FRENCH WILL MAKE HIS RELEASE ONE OF CONDITIONS ON FUTURE AID TO LAOS, WHEN THEY HAVE AID NEGOTIATIONS WITH LAO.

4. COMMENT: FRENCH OBVIOUSLY HAVE SAME CONSULAR PROBLEMS ALL OTHER WESTERN EMBASSIES FACE HERE. IT IS WORTH NOTING, HOWEVER, THAT LAO HAVE NOT REPORTED ARRESTS OF FRENCH CITIZENS IN NEWSPAPERS, AS THEY REGULARLY DO WITH ANY ARREST OF AMCITS. CORCORAN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TEACHERS, ARRESTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 08 MAR 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976VIENTI00590
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760088-0634
From: VIENTIANE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760382/aaaacuso.tel
Line Count: 83
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 19 APR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <19 APR 2004 by ElyME>; APPROVED <20 APR 2004 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: LAO ARREST FRENCH TEACHER
TAGS: PFOR, PINS, LA, FR, (SALUZZO)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006